I CLAIM:

1   1.   A telecommunications system for provisioning an inter-provider

2   internet protocol (IP) service, comprising:

3   a first network associated with a first service provider, said first network

4   having a plurality of resources;

5   a second network associated with a second service provider, said second

6   network having a plurality of resources, said second network being operable to

7   receive a request for the inter-provider IP service;

8   means for determining real-time availability of first ones of the plurality of

9   resources of said first network needed for the inter-provider IP service and real-time

10   availability of second ones of the plurality of resources of said second network needed

11   for the inter-provider IP service; and

12   means for automatically provisioning the inter-provider IP service using the

13   first resources and the second resources.

1   2.   The telecommunications system of Claim 1, further comprising:

2   means for advertising the availability of the plurality of resources of said first

3   network and the availability of the plurality of resources of said second network

4   between said first network and said second network.

1 3. The telecommunications system of Claim 1, further comprising:

2 a unified and integrated switch connected to said first network and said second

3 network, said unified and integrated switch having common resources, a first portion

4 of the common resources being dedicated to the first service provider and being

5 capable of being configured by the first service provider, a second portion of the

6 common resources being dedicated to the second service provider and being capable

7 of being configured by the second service provider.

1 4. The telecommunications system of Claim 3, wherein said unified and

2 integrated switch includes a first logical communications node associated with the

3 first service provider and capable of being dynamically configured in a customized

4 manner by the first service provider and a second logical communications node

5 associated with the second service provider and capable of being dynamically

6 configured in a customized manner by the second service provider.

1 5. The telecommunications system of Claim 3, wherein said unified and

2 integrated switch is within said first network, the first service provider being a

3 wholesale service provider, the second service provider being a retail service

4 provider.

1 6. The telecommunications system of Claim 1, further comprising:

2 means for calculating cost information for use of the first resources and the

3 second resources for the inter-provider IP service, the cost information including a

4 cost for the first resources and a cost for the second resources.

1   7.   The telecommunications system of Claim 6, further comprising:

2   means for creating an electronic contract between the first service provider

3   and the second service provider using the cost information.

1   8.   The telecommunications system of Claim 6, wherein said means for

2   calculating comprises:

3   a software engine configured to receive the request for the inter-provider IP

4   service, calculate pricing scenarios using the request, obtain real-time resource

5   information, calculate real-time prices for each of the pricing scenarios using the real-

6   time resource information and customize the cost information based on the first

7   service provider, the second service provider, the request and the real-time prices.

1   9.   The telecommunications system of Claim 8, further comprising:

2   a database for storing the real-time resource information.

1   10.   The telecommunications system of Claim 9, wherein said means for

2   provisioning includes an operational support system connected to said software

3   engine and said database, said operational support system being further configured to

4   manage the inter-provider IP service in real-time.

1   11.   A method for provisioning an inter-provider internet protocol (IP)

2   service across at least two service providers, comprising:

3   receiving a request for the inter-provider IP service;

4   determining real-time availability of resources of the at least two service

5   providers needed for the inter-provider IP service; and

6   automatically provisioning the inter-provider IP service between the at least

7   two service providers using the determined resources.

1   12.   The method of Claim 11, further comprising:

2   advertising the availability of the resources of the at least two service

3   providers between the at least two service providers.

1   13.   The method of Claim 11, further comprising:

2   providing a unified and integrated switch for the at least two service providers,

3   the unified and integrated switch having common resources;

4   configuring a first portion of the common resources dedicated to the first

5   service provider by the first service provider; and

6   configuring a second portion of the common resources dedicated to the second

7   service provider by the second service provider.

1   14.   The method of Claim 13, further comprising:

2   dynamically configuring in a customized manner a first logical

3   communications node by the first service provider; and

4   dynamically configuring in a customized manner a second logical

5   communications node by the second service provider.

1   15.   The method of Claim 13, wherein the first service provider is a

2   wholesale service provider and the second service provider is a retail service provider.

1   16.   The method of Claim 11, further comprising:

2   calculating cost information for use of the resources of the first service

3   provider and the second service provider for the inter-provider IP service.

1   17.   The method of Claim 16, further comprising:

2   creating an electronic contract between the first service provider and the

3   second service provider using the cost information.

1   18.   The method of Claim 16, wherein said calculating comprises:

2   calculating pricing scenarios using the request;

3   obtaining real-time resource information;

4   calculating real-time prices for each of the pricing scenarios using the real-

5   time resource information; and

6   customizing the cost information based on the first service provider, the

7   second service provider, the request and the real-time prices.

1   19.   The method of Claim 18, further comprising:

2   collecting the real-time resource information; and

3   storing the real-time resource information.

1   20.   The method of Claim 19, wherein said provisioning further

2   comprising:

3   managing the inter-provider IP service in real-time.

1   21.   The method of Claim 11, wherein said provisioning further

2   comprising:

3   incorporating network infrastructure and resources in said provisioning;

4   incorporating business relations among the at least two service providers

5   dynamically and in real-time in said provisioning, wherein the business relations

6   include at least contracts and prices; and

7   incorporating business objectives in said provisioning, wherein the business

8   objectives include at least one of financial ratios, service volume and profitability.